

Recycler of the Year Kristin Simon

The Recycler of the Year Award is the Iowa Recycling Association's highest honor and is awarded to an individual whose career is a reflection of the recipient's impassioned and numerous contributions to the advancement of recycling and waste reduction in Iowa. For her implementation of traditional and nontraditional approaches to waste management education, her due diligence in making these campaigns available to others and her overall positive approach in expanding the recycling message, this year the distinction of Recycler of the Year goes to Kristin Simon.

Imitation - The Highest Form of Flattery

Kristin Simon, Eastern Iowa Central Council of Governments (ECICOG), has implemented a variety of new and innovative waste reduction and recycling education programs. One of her most successful has been the *Summer Library Reading Program* which she takes on the road to several public libraries located within in her service area throughout the summer.

Each year, Kristin chooses an age appropriate book and develops a presentation and activity relating to resource conservation, composting or household hazardous materials management. The program has promoted waste reduction to approximately 3,000 students and their parents and has created positive relationships with the public library system. In Kristin's case the old adage, "Imitation is the highest form of flattery" is very true. As a testament to the success of this program, educators throughout the state have duplicated Kristin's efforts within their own service areas.

Working the MRF

Kristin developed another creative and successful program also being replicated by recycling educators throughout the state - the Mini-Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). The Mini-MRF is a portable, scaled down model of a recycling sort line and allows children and adults alike to learn about recycling by actually "working" at a materials recovery facility.

In conjunction with the Mini-MRF model, Kristin developed a solid waste education unit for 4th and 5th graders. Lessons include the history of waste management techniques, information regarding material flow within a materials recovery facility, resource conservation activities and information on landfill design and composting.

These are but two examples of Kristin's numerous innovations. In addition to developing new programs, Kristin also educates the educators on how to present this information to students within their own areas.

"Kristin's impassioned work has increased waste reduction and recycling education in the ECICOG region and throughout the state. She is very deserving of this most prestigious award," stated Erin Novak Iowa Recycling Association President.